

Senator Bromm, Senator Cudaback, Senator Janssen. The question before the body is, shall debate now cease? Call-in votes have been authorized.

CLERK: Senator Hartnett voting yes. Senator Fisher voting no. Senator Jensen voting yes. Senator Fisher changing from no to yes. Senator Brashear voting yes. Senator Schrock voting yes.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Record.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 4 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Debate is now ceased. Senator Bernard-Stevens, to close on your amendment.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Senator Fisher, I had my hopes up there just for a second, but they were dashed. Members of the body, I think the argument of the amendment actually has been somewhat misplaced. Again, maybe it's too complicated of an argument to try to put forth in just one and a half times or two times speaking but I'm not making the argument that necessarily we want to lower the level so that there is simply more. My argument is, I believe this bill will be killed or bracketed or substantially reduced in funding. If it is going to be reduced in funding, and I hope it's reduced to zero, then you don't have the \$6 million to put out there anymore. You have maybe \$2 million to put out there. If you have a \$500,000 level on just \$2 million, you get four grant potentials. That's it. And Senator Warner is right, 500,000 will do a lot, you know, in a business. What I want to do is put it to 250 because if the amount is going to be lower, we still want to have as many businesses as possible. Senator Schellpeper, I think, had the best line, though he didn't say it on the mike, he said \$500,000 may not be a lot...or \$250,000 may not be a lot in Omaha or Lincoln to the businesses above 50 people, but in Stanton you can buy about everything but the bank for \$250,000. In the rural areas, Senator Janssen has an amendment that will be coming that will talk about dedicating a portion of the amount to people with 50 employees or less or under 50 employees. These companies, these entrepreneurs of Nebraska, if they would get help on expanding, 250,000 help to those businesses would be a godsend. It would be amazing what you could do and it may not be a major company in Omaha and Lincoln. It may be a mom and pop store in Lewellyn, Nebraska or some other place, but in those small towns 250,000 would be